A U M

Mere sophistry declares this "true," and that view "false."—BUDDHA

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WORD PUZZLES

FEW if any Theosophists will find easy the task of accurately defining Theosophy; there are good and sufficient reasons for this difficulty. These can be perceived as soon as one reflects upon the fact that, while *theo-sophia* has often been associated with devotion to particular teachers and teachings, it has also represented the essence of *individual* inquiry into what are usually called "religious mysteries." Since religion usually connotes discipleship both to a specific teacher and to a fairly settled structure of faith, and since individual inquiry usually signifies relinquishment of *all* static referents, the Theosophist is apt to appear to be trying for an impossible synthesis. It is, in fact, the basic Theosophical "belief," though, that this sort of synthesis *is* possible.

It is one thing, however, to believe that a synthesis between the devotional life and analytical inquiry is not impossible, and quite another to delude oneself into thinking that the joining of the two is, or ever will be, easy. In the eyes of many conversant with the subtleties of this achievement, a too-confident Theosophist may appear more than a little ridiculous; for example, if one vehemently asserts that Theosophists have nothing to do with belief, but only with "knowledge," and that he, as a student of Theosophy, has no beliefs, he will seem to border on absurdity. For to believe that one has no beliefs, and has passed forever beyond reliance upon or need for them, is to mis-state fact, as well as to entertain serious delusions of grandeur. Yet, on the other hand, a prejudice against "blind belief" is one of the few constructive prejudices in existence.

Just as the effort of the individual Theosophist to be philosophical in relation to his private matters of religion involves penetrating subjective mysteries, the history of usage of the word Theosophy is similarly involved in complexity. We can discover, for instance, if only from a reading of dictionaries and encyclopedias, that a full definition of Theosophy must take into account three different usages—each with a relation to the others, but each meriting particularized reflection. The following considerations are certainly relevant to the clarification of usage, while suggesting, also, something of the relationship between the *psychology* and the *history* of Theosophy.

(1) As a term of general classification, theosophy signifies belief in the possibility of direct, individual cognition of all that is usually called "divine" or ultimate mystery. Reference to divinity may be symbolical or metaphorical, and the knowledge of "God" and things divine implied is held in theosophy to arise from the comprehension, or intuition, of each student—not dependent upon priestly assistance, theological belief, nor conditions established by historical revelation.

(2) "Theosophy" also stands for all programs of study based upon the assumption that each religion is apt to contain a measure of basic truth, and that such truth can best emerge only when differing traditions of belief receive comparative examination. Thus the work of the Theosophical school of Ammonius Saccas in the fourth century undertook the evaluative study of all religions and philosophies—honoring truth wherever it might be found. The Theosophical Society in the last century, founded in 1875 largely through the influence of Madame H. P. Blavatsky, established an identical program: Men and women, whatever their particular faith or affiliation, were invited to share and compare from their various standpoints, endeavoring to maintain open minds, and hoping to gain new insights, particularly from the neglected treasure-houses of eastern philosophy.

(3) "Theosophy" has also come to stand for some particular and persistent conclusions and/or reputed discoveries, reached by numbers of those who, over the centuries, have undertaken study on the aforementioned basis. Thus the conception, for example, of an evolution of soul through a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations. Buddha, Pythagoras, Plato, Socrates and Ammonius Saccas, to name but a few, having believed in free and comparative examination of all religious doctrines, apparently shared the view of the later German philosopher, Schopenhauer, who remarked that rebirth "presents itself

as the natural conviction of man whenever he is allowed to reflect in an unprejudiced manner." Such unanimity on the question of immortality was pointed to by Madame Blavatsky as also indicating a natural fraternity in knowledge and among all knowers thereof—existence of a "Gnosis" into which many sages have become initiated. She speaks of Theosophy as scientific religion and religious science—composed, in part, of a "secret doctrine" which need no longer remain secret from those willing to divest themselves from all creedal and factional prejudice. Though everything actually *known* about the spiritual or "God-like" aspects of man's nature thus becomes a part of Theosophy, the word also signified, for Madame Blavatsky, a body of knowledge presently available, together with a clear statement of its fundamental propositions, in the writings she presented.

Theosophy, we have said, is not essentially "doctrine." Nor is Theosophy adequately describable in terms of ideas, no matter how philosophically valid, nor "facts," howsoever authenticated. Perhaps the truest definition would be one which designates as "Theosophy" *all that certain ideas and perspectives have accomplished in the minds and lives of men.* Here, at least, we have guarantee that Theosophy will not be separated from the vast "Theosophical Movement" about which H. P. Blavatsky wrote.

That the identification of the word "Theosophy" with a movement of ideas and aspirations traceable to "the remotest antiquity" was one of H.P.B.'s two central points of emphasis can hardly be doubted. The structure of *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* were clearly chosen to supply a variegated chain of evidence for this contention—and to raise the assertion beyond the classification of mere "contention." Was this a concession to the passion for "objective evidence," characteristic of nineteenth-century science? Or was it rather a demonstration that, when one reasoned from correct intuitions, evidence to satisfy the intellectual part of man's nature could be found without real difficulty? Here we come to one of the psychological roots of any "theosophy" worthy of the name—in the premise that reason and intuition are not essentially at loggerheads, that truly grand dreams and imaginings have corollaries in "objective" reality, and that each man is capable, therefore, of achieving a synthesis which may correctly be termed his own portion of "divine wisdom."

The second major emphasis of H.P.B.'s works may be found in the claim that a *gnosis,* definite and accurate, exists and has always existed

—a "body of knowledge" which can be transmitted both through the efforts of humanity's greatest teachers and by humble disciples. The critic of Theosophy, at this point, may think he has found justification for holding that Theosophy is but another set of revelational claims; the present intent, however, is to call attention to the fact that, once the existence of a living philosophy of reincarnation and karma had been demonstrated as native to every race and clime, the existence of such a *gnosis* as that presented by H.P.B. is *one of the few logical conclusions which may be seen to follow.* If untrammeled philosophy and individual mystic experience consistently revolve around the same essential ideas, if the attempted conditionings of orthodoxy fail to contain or smother such convictions as those on soul evolution through reincarnation and karma, a strong case is automatically established for the *gnosis* approach to religious questions.

So, for rational man, conviction of the reality of a Wisdom Religion depends upon demonstration of the continued existence of a Theosophical Movement—one reason why it is impossible to define Theosophy correctly by brief reference to any particular set of doctrinal forms. "Intuitive man" may not require such an apparently roundabout route, but it is also one of the first principles of philosophic discipline, emphasized by H.P.B., that one does not truly know anything that he does not know in every fiber of his being. Certainty is not reached by reason or intuition alone, but by cooperative blending of the two.

There are, then, several "theosophies" to be considered by a student: (1) The Theosophical Movement throughout past history, as indicated by such definitively eclectic work as that of Ammonius Saccas. (2) The theosophy acquired by each individual according to his own rational and intuitive guidance. (3) All the symbols, glyphs, allegories, and teachings depicting the continued evolution of the soul through a "series of progressive awakenings." (4) The Theosophy presented as a body of wisdom, inclusive of "true doctrine," by Madame Blavatsky.

So the task of defining Theosophy is very much *like* Theosophy itself—impossible in any completeness of meaning, without a proper effort toward synthesis. It is not by any one of the many "correct" descriptions of Theosophy that one comes to understand either the meaning of the Theosophical Movement of past ages or of H.P. Blavatsky's efforts in the last century. No better way, perhaps, exists for comprehending the *universal* nature of "theosophia" than for each one to undertake the sort of analysis that has been explored in this brief article.

The analysis, the painstaking questioning, and the research natural to the scientific temperament here play their part; at the level of philosophical definition, the formal disciplines of logic and the contributions of semantics have clear relevance to the explorations of all Theosophists who seek to better "know what they truly know" apart from that which is merely believed. There are, of course, many to point out the distinction between what *other* people know and what they merely believe to be true, but the Theosophist is compelled to be primarily concerned with distinctions between what *he himself* knows and what he merely believes.

Theosophy, after all, is meant to achieve an end to sectarianism precisely because it suggests the need for transcending all of those specialized definitions which give men of orthodoxy false assurance. The death of sectarianism comes from broadmindedness, which is "eclecticism" in its highest and best sense, and by the correspondent and subsequent awakening of the highest faculties of mind.

The Theosophist may have beliefs, he may have a definite faith, he may show devotion to certain teachers in particular, but he also is obliged to know that he *has* beliefs, that he professes and expresses a faith, and that he has a special feeling for a special teacher. If he relies upon belief, faith and devotion, and is unaware that he does, he is in danger. The Theosophical Movement has, in many ages, been forced to adopt iconoclastic guises simply because the unwarranted assurance of those who followed a great teacher—and who thought the knowledge of that teacher also *theirs*—has led to rigidities of belief destructive of original meaning.

To fully define Theosophy, we must consider it under all its aspects. The interior world has not been hidden from all by impenetrable darkness. By that higher intuition acquired by *Theosophia*—or God-knowledge, which carried the mind from the world of form into that of formless spirit, man has been sometimes enabled in every age and every country to perceive things in the interior or invisible world. The search after man's diviner "self," so often and so erroneously interpreted as individual communion with a personal God, was the object of every mystic, and belief in its possibility seems to have been coeval with the genesis of humanity, each people giving it another name.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE REAL CHRISTMAS

[Following are printed two articles on Christmas: the first, a transcription of a talk by Robert Crosbie, first appeared in THEOSOPHY for November, 1920; the second, an article by H. P. Blavatsky, in *Lucifer* for March, 1891. Truly sacred festivals have an esoteric basis, constant and universal, and Christmas is such a festival—not the festival of the Birth of the prophet of Christendom, but of the Birth of the Sun-God under many names. H. P. Blavataky wrote (*Lucifer,* January, 1888)—"Let no one imagine that it is a mere fancy, the attaching of importance to the birth of the year. The earth passes through its definite phases and man with it; and as a day can be coloured so can a year. The astral life of the earth is young and strong between Christmas and Easter."—EDS.]

THE general idea of the origin of Christmas is that the 25th day of December was made notable by the birth of Jesus of Nazareth; and in commemoration of that Being, so divine as to be called the Savior of mankind, the *Christ Mass* is a season for the giving of gifts—also, for the expectation of receiving them, one might say, for men have lost all sense of the true meaning of Christmas. Even, as a matter of fact, we *know* nothing whatever of the birth of Christ. There is no historical record anywhere of His birth at such a date; yet, the choosing of this season of the year for the birth of a Divine Being is really based on fact—a fact that belongs to the ancients. The Christmas idea is borrowed from those whom we choose to call the pagans, as indeed, have been all our theological ceremonies, rituals and ideas. Ages before the time of Jesus Christ, among all the ancient peoples, were ceremonies at this season of the year similar in kind to our own, which had reference to a certain occurrence in the events of time. For it is then that the Sun itself returns from its journey southward to the north again—and this coming of the Sun was understood to be the birth of the Sun.

But the Christmas season has its own peculiar occult reference. It is the season of the birth of the Sun—the coming back and bringing into fructification those seeds and plants needing Sun energy for their growth and expression. It is far more than that, because behind the Sun, as behind every body, there is spirit, life, and intelligence. So, with the return of the Sun, comes a spiritual, a mental, a moral growth and uplifting. There is a springtime not only in the lower kingdoms—among plants and animals—but among men. There is an incursion of energy, so to speak, which, if we could take advantage of, would enable

us to do much more than we now do. But we have lost the knowledge that we had. We have forgotten, and so we do not apply to ourselves the fact of the recurrence of this real Christmas time—the season, not only of the physical renewal of the earth and all beings, but also a return of the inner life, and of impulse of a spiritual kind.

Between Christmas Day and the day called Easter—which again has its own significance—the life of the earth is young. Then, too, the inner life has its rejuvenescence and its growth; ideas then taken hold of and carried into expression have tenfold the power which they would have at another time. Christmas is a season of birth and of growth; it is the season of the rebirth of the spiritual nature. The birth of Jesus was made to accord with this old knowledge of the past and ancient observances.

The whole of life has its recurrent way as well as its recession. Day and night, summer and winter, life and death are the seasons of nature. But the perceiver—the experiencer—of these seasons is the self-conscious Man, who lives when the body dies, who is awake when the body rests at night, who is continually observant whether the body is awake or asleep. The Man is conscious every moment. He sees recurrent waves of activity of one kind, then rest; he sees other kinds of activity, then rest. He sees the return of his thoughts and his feelings, reinforced and strengthened on the second coming, or reduced and weakened, according to the degree of energy he has given them. Always there is the return of impressions—from hour to hour, from month to month, from year to year. It is the course of all beings of every kind to follow the law of action and reaction, to proceed through the coming back of that which was before plus whatever has been incurred in the meantime. There is no cessation of this law; an eternality of progress, which is not restricted to any particular form and which is within the means and reach of every individual in every part of the universe. So, we can not work for ourselves alone, nor progress by ourselves alone, but taking advantage of all recurrent waves and seasons of uplift, we may go on from plane to plane, from state to state, from quality of being to quality of being.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune," it is said. This is merely an expression and recognition of the same law of recurrent impression. For the opportunities of each life come from the past; each life as it is has been produced by the life or lives preceding, and aspirations are recurrent ideas of the past. When-

ever there is a spiritual idea in the heart or in the mind, then is the beginning of the rising tide for that individual; then is the time for him to take advantage of the cycle—to make every possible effort in the direction of his purpose. For the time is ripe, and the time will pass again, just as surely as the Sun moves northward and then south again. In that time of rising tide, we must acquire the stamina—the power of concentrated effort—which will hold us through the receding tide and give us a better standing when the tide again rises.

There are also tides in nature for races and civilizations. Every civilization has its beginning and its ending. This present civilization will end as others before it have ended. No civilization, however great, will ever continue as such, because it merely represents a state of mind and a body suited to it; it must reach its limit of expression to then die out. The individuals who made that race, however, will come again with whatever they have gained; they will come on a better basis and from there go on a little further. There is a rising tide in the birth of a nation, and all through its life are various tides rising and falling. For us, a tide of recession has prevailed through many centuries. We are living in the Iron Age, which was preceded by other better Ages known as the Gold, the Silver, and the Bronze Ages. This is a hard and cruel Age—an Age of spiritual darkness—but in it we have to make a foundation of all that existed in the other Ages; we have to bring into expression all that existed before, and put the very highest of all that preceded into practical use. Not only have we to pass through this Iron Age with all the aspirations of the other Ages, but we must start a new *Golden Age* with all that we have gained.

At the present time, all our discoveries, our science, our religion, our social and national life are material—without spirituality. The more the self-conscious spiritual man has gone into matter, the more he has closed his spiritual doors, because his self-consciousness and energy have been put into terrestrial, objective things. But he must go through these stages and emerge from them, bringing with him all the knowledge he has gained thereby. And not only is his effort to gain knowledge for himself, but also to impart his feeling and understanding to the kingdoms below him, in the matter which he uses. Then when he moves up the scale of being, that matter, too, will be lifted up and become more fitting for his use.

In the receding tide, old theological ideas have lost their sway over the minds of men. Minds are searching in every direction for that

which is stable, permanent, and true; they are looking for a knowledge which is feasible and practical. A tide comes for the presentment of such knowledge. A tide comes for the appearance of Beings greater than we are—greater because at some time They took advantage of the rising tide to go far beyond where the ordinary man found himself able to go. These Beings come at certain great seasons, as the heavens tell the story in the Messianic cycle. The passage of the Sun from one sign to another of the Zodiac takes a period of about twenty-one hundred years—the cycle of the coming of a great Teacher. We need only to know that a great Teacher existed at some time here to count forward or backward and know when another has been or will be.

The Real Christmas can come to us in our hearts. We can realize that there has arrived once more the season we can rise with. If we make up our minds to do it, we can follow the Path of our great Predecessors—the great Saviors of the world, the great Saviors of all times. They all come from the same Body, whether we call Them Buddha, Jesus, or any other name. They are all Beings of the same nature who come among us, and, as was said of Jesus, in all things become like unto us that They may impart to us something of Their great knowledge and point us to the Path They followed. Always, the object of Their coming is that we in time may become even as They are. Always, They leave messages for us which are set down and known as the sayings of the Founders of all the great religions. Jesus, for whom the Christian nations celebrate Christmas, was one of a Body of perfected men. There were many others before Him; there have been others since; there will yet be others.

Christmas is a time for giving and also for receiving. But there is a giving that is not of things. There is a giving of the heart itself. There is the giving of service, of love, of brotherhood, of every thought that makes for good—a giving open to all, however poor our personal possessions may be. It is the feeling and the thought in our hearts which reach people and stir *their* hearts to a better perception, a better feeling, a wider and stronger action—for all our hearts are based in the same One Life. The Real Christmas means something to the Real Man, and it applies to the whole of man's nature. Let us take advantage of the resurgence of spiritual, mental, and moral force that comes with the Christmas time.

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

THE custom of the Christmas tree is a very recent institution. It is of a late date not only in Russia, but also in Germany, where it was first established and whence it spread everywhere, in the New as well as in the Old World. In France the Christmas tree was adopted only after the Franco-German war, later therefore than 1870. According to Prussian chronicles, the custom of lighting the Christmas tree as we now find it in Germany was established about a hundred years ago. It penetrated into Russia about 1830, and was very soon adopted throughout the Empire by the richer classes.

It is very difficult to trace the custom historically. Its origin belongs undeniably to the highest antiquity. Fir trees have ever been held in honour by the ancient nations of Europe. As ever-green plants, and symbols of never-dying vegetation, they were sacred to the nature-deities, such as Pan, Isis and others. According to ancient folklore the pine was born from the body of the nymph Pitys* (the Greek name of that tree), the beloved of the Gods Pan and Boreas. During the vernal festivals in honour of the great goddess of Nature, fir trees were brought into the temples decorated with fragrant violets.

The ancient Northern peoples of Europe had a like reverence for the pine and fir trees in general, and made great use of them at their various festivals. Thus, for instance, it is well known that the pagan priests of ancient Germany, when celebrating the first stage of the sun's return toward the vernal equinox, held in their hands highly ornamented pine branches. And this points to the great probability of the now Christian custom of lighting Christmas trees being the echo of the pagan custom of regarding the pine as a symbol of a solar festival, the precursor of the birth of the Sun. It stands to reason that its adoption and establishment in Christian Germany imparted to it a new, and so to speak, Christian form.† Thence fresh legends—as is always the case—explaining in their own way the origin of the ancient custom. We know of one such legend, remarkably poetical in its charming simplicity, which pur-

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NOTE.—From an article by Dr. Kaygorodoff in the *Novoyê Vremya.*

* A Nymph beloved by the god Pan and changed into a fir tree.

† As in the case of many other such customs, and even dogmas borrowed and preserved without the least acknowledgement. If the source is now confessed, it is because in the face of research and discovery it can no longer be helped.

ports to give the origin of this now universally prevailing custom of ornamenting Christmas trees with lighted wax tapers.

Near the cave in which was born the Saviour of the world grew three trees—a pine, an olive, and a palm. On that holy eve when the guiding star of Bethlehem appeared in the heavens, that star which announced to the long-suffering world the birth of Him, who brought to mankind the glad tidings of a blissful hope, all nature rejoiced and is said to have carried to the feet of the Infant-God her best and holiest gifts.

Among others the olive tree that grew at the entrance of the cave of Bethlehem brought forth its golden fruits; the palm offered to the Babe its green and shadowy vault, as a protection against heat and storm; alone the pine had nought to offer. The poor tree stood in dismay and sorrow, vainly trying to think what it could present as a gift to the Child-Christ. Its branches were painfully drooping down, and the intense agony of its grief finally forced from its bark and branches a flood of hot transparent tears, whose large resinous and gummy drops fell thick and fast around it. A silent star, twinkling in the blue canopy of heaven, perceived these tears; and forthwith, confabulating with her companions—lo, a miracle took place. Hosts of shooting stars fell down, like unto a great rain shower, on the pine until they twinkled and shone from every needle, from top to bottom. Then trembling with joyful emotion, the pine proudly raised her drooping branches and appeared for the first time before the eyes of a wondering world, in most dazzling brightness. From that time, the legend tells us, men adopted the habit of ornamenting the pine tree on Christmas Eve with numberless lighted candles.

The Christmas festivities that were held by the Christians for nearly fifteen centuries, were of a particularly pagan character. Nay, we are afraid that even the present ceremonies of the church can hardly escape the reproach of being almost literally copied from the mysteries of Egypt and Greece, held in honour of Osiris and Horus, Apollo and Bacchus. Both Isis and Ceres were called "Holy Virgins" and a DIVINE BABE may be found in every "heathen" religion. . . . Down to the present times, during the days preceding Christmas, such mysteries are being enacted in Southern Russia, Poland, and Galicia; and known as the *Kalidowki.*

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE NATURAL PERFECTIONS

This is its touch upon the blossomed rose,
The fashion of its hand shaped lotus-leaves;

The ordered music of the marching orbs
It makes in viewless canopy of sky;
In deep abyss of earth it hides up gold,
Sards, sapphires, lazuli.

—*The Light of Asia*

THE instruction of nature is a constant companion of the observant man. No one can read the works of great naturalists without marvelling at the wisdom they distill from the world of living forms, from the habits of flowers and beasts, and from the organic intelligence of the human body. There is a magic serenity in the processes of nature, a beauty without vanity, a kind of motiveless practice of the virtues which shames the human race, even while affording inspiration.

Nature, one might say, is an endless array of relative perfections. Even in the disorder of the forest floor, the unmistakable rightness of all creates a simple majesty. The carpet of leaves decaying into humus, the fungus attacking the dead stump, the myriad population of small insects which live on the death of the forest while preparing the soil for new growth—together these things establish a balance which the visitor recognizes as having the sanctity of life, and which he longs to leave undisturbed.

Then there is the presence of man in a natural environment. Man need not be an invader of the temple of natural life, and sometimes is not. The attractions felt by men for simple pastoral scenes, blending the life of man with the life of nature, seem somehow a recognition that one may share in the perfections of nature, and that his presence may be conceived as some sort of climax in the natural landscape. The figure of man remains, however, a mute symbol of some additional or higher intelligence, having a matrix in nature, yet with hidden purposes which reach beyond. A man meditating in the forest, or peering out to sea—what is his role? Yet the pictorial fitness of the idea is confirmed by an æsthetic satisfaction.

How man violates nature and trades on her secrets, despoils her beauty and caricatures her joys—this is another tale, the telling of which has other purposes. Here, let us consider the various human perfections, since they, too, exist, and share with the natural world the power of instruction.

The work of the artist encompasses a perfection in the mastery of form and the skill of representation. The artist has capacity for the sure stroke of creation. The envy of the unskilled for what the artist is able to do—and of his natural pleasure in doing it—is like the child's uncomplicated reverence for the competence and ability of his parents. The artist is possessed of a kind of yoga; art may have many levels, with subtleties not reached by all, but there is an appropriate excellence for each area of creation, and therefore a true perfection may exist in every case. The artist and his work are precious to us for the instruction afforded in what perfection—however small or limited—really consists in, and what are its fruits. Even though the true artist can never be finally satisfied with his work, but longs to square the circle in his own way—just as every man seeks to press his actions into the timeless order of reality—mastery of his tools and materials frees him to dream of aspiration. And then, perhaps, he may feel the reproach of the unambitious beauty of the natural world, and turn to record the contentment of the living forms about him, if only as a still memorial to the restlessness so often felt within.

The artist or craftsman serves as an irreplaceable symbol of the strivings of the inner life. It is not by accident that the great craft of Masonry provided forms for a fraternity of men devoted to high principles. Everywhere in the visible world may be found the signature of invisible things and the sure instinct of great teachers has made them use the vocabulary of symbolism to convey ideas which could hardly be spoken in words.

Yet symbolisms have always to be converted into transcendental meanings. The entire speech of finite perfections is like sight of a natural world from afar. It contains the secret of life, but the secret remains hidden. The lilies of the field are patient chalices of natural glory, yet how can a man be patient without accepting a like confinement that restricts his enterprise? The lilies teach, but they also mock. And if the artist bears a lamp of lunar brilliance, mirroring the divine fire, is not his still only a reflected flame? Tolstoy loved and learned

from the peasants, but he could not be a peasant. He had to suffer on as a man unable to evade the pitiless light of his own self-consciousness.

Surely, we expect too much of life. Who can join the tribe of Prometheus without experiencing the ordeal that is a part of the Promethean career? The man who wants the wisdom of Odin must be willing to offer an eye in exchange. It is this, perhaps, that we learn so bitterly, wanting and wasting, declaring our devotion, yet shrinking from uncertainty, from the dark abyss which hides the true connection between the world of nature and the world of man.

Where, then, is the place of contentment? Contentment is for what is, the restless surge of intention for what will be. Days spent in longing and nights in self-reproach are involuted denials of the very processes of life. Who will whisper to the rocks to spring up and be free, or call upon the winds to cease their blowing? They are what is. The genius is the medium of his mode of expression, a captive of the muse, and we may deplore his captivity, but never forget the completeness of his devotion.

Can a man serve the formless spirit, the protean presence which defies every confinement, with the same intensity? If not, then he had better restrain his criticism of those who practice more perfectly the lesser arts.

With patience, it is possible to acquire the dignity worn by a shabby man who does not feel himself changed to a lesser being by his poverty. It is more difficult to learn patience with a mean and shabby spirit, yet who can escape this need? The world is lightened by people who walk content, who cannot feel the ignominy heaped upon them by circumstances, whose lives are a testament to possibilities rather than conditions. Can a disciple of the doctrine of the heart do less?

The world is infinitely rich in the instruction of this sort of learning. Not a soul exists but has some kind of perfection to display, some excellence of mind or body, though it be only a common human endowment. This day the visible perfection is one thing, tomorrow it may be another. We know nothing of the stars of our fellows, nor what they are really about when they cross our paths.

THE ANATHEMAS AGAINST ORIGEN

IV

Anathema No. IV

> If anyone shall say that the reasonable creatures in whom the divine love had grown cold have been hidden in gross bodies such as ours and have been called man, while those who have attained the lowest degree of wickedness have shared cold and obscure bodies and are become and called demons and evil spirits: let him be anathema.

IT was through the necessity of evolution that the "reasonable creatures," or Mind-Born Sons, descended into bodies of "gross matter such as ours." It was not part of the plan, however, that they should so identify themselves with their physical casements as to become completely "hidden" in them. The physical human body was intended to be an instrument of the soul, a tool to be taken up and put aside at Will by the user. Growing "cold" in divine love, however, becoming selfish and self-seeking, the Reincarnating Egos lost sight of the true spiritual nature of themselves and of all others, so that the Real became "hidden" from view within.

"The lowest degree of wickedness" on this Earth doubtless refers to those beings mentioned in *The Ocean of Theosophy* as black magicians. These demons and evil spirits are "definite, coherent entities, human souls bereft of the spiritual tie, now tending down to the worst state of all, *Avitchi,* where annihilation of the personality is the end." They are the only damned beings mentioned in Theosophical philosophy. The "cold and obscure bodies" which they inhabit are the Kama-Rupic shells existing in the astral sphere surrounding the earth.

Hell, with the ancients, had little resemblance to the bottomless pit of fire believed in by present day religionists, wherein souls are tormented throughout eternity for evils committed. With the Scandinavians, it is a cold and cheerless abode, an intermediate state of purification. "The idea of a hot hell,"says H. P. Blavatsky, "is an afterthought, the distortion of an astronomical allegory." One of the chief differences between modern Christianity and the old pagan faiths is the belief of the former in a personal devil and a burning hell, the two dread superstitions by which numberless millions of the poor ignorant masses have been held in subjection for centuries. Evidently Origen did not sub-

scribe either to the idea of a hot hell or to a place of eternal damnation —not even for those who had attained "the lowest degree of wickedness."

No. IX of Emperor Justinian's Anathemas reads:

> If anyone says or thinks that the punishment of demons and of impious men is only temporary, and will one day have an end, and that a restoration will take place of demons and of impious men, let him be anathema.

Origen taught the theosophical idea that by selfishness and evil an individual cuts himself off from the warmth and fellowship growing out of the bond of Universal Brotherhood and is thrust by his own choice into the cold and obscure bodies of Kama Loka or Avitchi. Yet, even he is not without hope of final redemption.

Reincarnation has been called the lost chord of Christianity. With this loss also vanished the doctrine of evolution—for the two are inseparable. There seems little doubt that the illogical Christian dogma of creation out of nothing arose directly from these anathemas against Origen's teaching of pre-existence and the evolution of souls from within outward.

Anathema No. V

> If anyone shall say that a psychic condition has come from an angelic or archangelic state, and moreover that a demoniac and a human condition has come from a psychic condition, and that from a human state they may become again angels and demons, and that each order of heavenly virtues is either all from those below or from those above and below: let him be anathema.

In the light of the ancient doctrine of evolution, which is always an unfolding from within outwards, it seems only natural to find a sage like Origen teaching that from an angelic or archangelic state, a psychic or soul condition was produced, and that from the latter the human state came finally into being. In the threefold division here outlined (the archangelic, the psychic, and the human), one may detect St. Paul's trinity of body, soul and spirit. To those acquainted with the teachings of *The Secret Doctrine* it seems strange that students of the Bible, though possessing this threefold division, should nevertheless have been unable to recognize in it the threefold scheme of evolution or unfoldment thus outlined by Origen. Man, according to Theosophy, has descended through various rungs of the ladder of evolution. Starting from a highly spiritual, or archangelic condition of homogeneity,

he clothed himself, step by step, in more and more dense degrees of matter and thus reached finally what we know as the human, or physical, state of being. The great objective now is to *climb* this ladder of being, whose foot rests, according to *The Voice of the Silence*—". . . in the mire of lies terrestrial." Rung by rung, the ladder must be reascended, until the high archangelic state of spirituality is again embraced.

> The Real Teaching is that the man himself, as spiritual being, descends from the plane of spirituality, or spiritual self-consciousness, step by step, through all the stages of condensation of matter; that he meets the uprising tide of form from the lower kingdoms, and when the most perfect form of all has been brought to its highest stage of development, he enters it. Not until that invisible man enters the physical instrument, could there be humanity at all. (Robert Crosbie)

The Oriental synonym for "Archangel," as used in Christianity, is *Dhyan Chohan,* of which there are seven classes. They are the first septenary differentiation of the One Universal Oversoul, or Logos. Man, in his sevenfold nature, derives his complex being directly from these seven classes or hierarchies of Dhyan Chohans. Being a compound of them all, each of his seven principles is directly related to, and partakes of, one of the seven principles of the Great Mother.

Anathema No. V sets forth Origen's proposition that evolution begins at the top, in Spirit, as taught by Theosophy, and that after having circled through the various degrees of matter (the chain of seven globes, or the seven centers of consciousness, in Esoteric Philosophy), it reascends, plus the experience gained. This idea is contained also in Anathema No. XV:

> If anyone shall say that the life of the spirits shall be like to the life which was in the beginning while as yet the spirits had not come down or fallen, so that the end and the beginning shall be alike, and that the end shall be the true measure of the beginning: let him be anathema.

With respect to Man, this implies that every human being has it within his power to reach to divinity, to rebecome the god he was in the beginning. With respect to Nature, it means that *all is life,* conscious in every part, and possessing the potentialities of the Whole.

When the cycles close, and final reabsorption is achieved, "there will no longer be any matter, but only spirit," as stated in Anathema No. XI.

THE STRAIGHT GATE

One has to grow into that state where he seeks nothing for himself, but takes whatever comes to pass as the thing most desired.

MAGIC appeared in the world with the earlier races of men. The ancients knew more concerning certain sciences than our modern savants have yet discovered. Reluctant as many are to confess as much, it has been acknowledged by more than one scientist. In the remote past, for ages, every true religion was based on a knowledge of the occult powers of nature. Magic was considered a divine science which led to a participation in the attributes of Divinity itself. "It unveils the operations of nature," says Philo Judæus, "and leads to the contemplation of celestial powers." In later periods its abuse and degeneration into sorcery made it an object of general abhorrence.

Eminent men were called gods by the ancients. The deification of mortal men and supposititious gods is no more a proof against their monotheism than the monument building of modern Christians, who erect statues to their heroes, is proof of their polytheism. Americans of the present century would consider it absurd in their posterity three thousand years hence to classify them as idolators for having built statues to their god, Washington. So shrouded in mystery was the Hermetic Philosophy, that Volney asserted that the ancient peoples worshipped their gross material symbols as divine in themselves; whereas these were only considered as representing esoteric principles. Men possessed of such knowledge and exercising such powers as were traditionally attributed to the ancient Magi of all lands, acquired them by patiently toiling for something better than the vain glory of passing fame. Seeking it not, they became immortal, as do all who labor for the good of the race, forgetful of mean self. Illuminated with the light of eternal truth, the rich-poor "alchemists" of every age fixed their attention upon the things that lie beyond the common ken, recognizing nothing inscrutable but the First Cause, and finding no questions unsolvable. To dare, to know, to will, and remain silent, was their constant rule. To be beneficent, unselfish, and unpretending, were, with them, spontaneous impulses. Disdaining the rewards of petty traffic, spurning wealth, luxury, pomp, and worldly power, they aspired to knowl-

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NOTE.—Collated from standard Theosophical works.

edge as the most satisfying of all acquisitions. They esteemed poverty, hunger, toil, and the evil report of men as none too great a price to pay for its achievement. They who might have lain on downy, velvet-covered beds, suffered themselves to die in hospitals and by the wayside rather than debase their souls and allow the profane cupidity of those who tempted them to triumph over their sacred vows. The lives of Paracelsus, Cornelius Agrippa, and Philalethes are too well known to repeat the old, sad story.

It is admitted on all hands that from time immemorial the distant East was the land of knowledge. Not even in Egypt were botany and mineralogy, for example, so extensively studied as by the savants of Middle Asia. Even the magic of the ancient Chaldeans was but a profound knowledge of the powers of simples and minerals. It was only when the theurgist desired divine help in spiritual and earthly matters that he sought direct communication, through religious rites, with pure spiritual beings. With them, even those spirits who remain invisible and communicate with mortals through their awakened inner sense, as in clairvoyance, clairaudience and trance, could only be evoked *subjectively* and as a result of purity of life and prayer. But all physical phenomena were produced simply by applying a knowledge of natural forces, although certainly not by the method of legerdemain, practiced in our day by the conjurers. Baptista Porta, in his treatise on *Natural Magic,* enumerates a whole catalogue of secret formulae for producing extraordinary effects by employing the occult powers of nature. Although the "magicians" believed as firmly as the spiritualists in a world of invisible spirits, none of them claimed to produce his effects under *their* control, through their sole help. They knew too well how difficult it is to keep away the elemental creatures when they have once found the door wide open.

With the Hindus such knowledge was and is more esoteric, if possible, than it was even among the Egyptian priests. So sacred was it deemed that its existence was only half admitted, and it was only practiced in public emergencies. It was more than a religious matter, for it was considered divine. The Egyptian hierophants, notwithstanding their practice of a stern and pure morality, could not be compared for one moment with the ascetical Gymnosophists of India, either in holiness of life or miraculous powers developed in them by the supernatural abjuration of everything earthly. By those who knew them they were held in still greater reverence than the magicians of

Chaldea. Denying themselves the simplest comforts of life, they dwelt in woods, and led the life of the most secluded hermits, while their Egyptian brothers at least congregated together. To attempt to say whether these Gymnosophists were the real founders of magic in India, or whether they only practiced what had passed to them as an inheritance from the earliest Rishis—the seven primeval sages—would be regarded as a mere speculation by exact scholars. To these men no secret power of either plant or mineral was unknown. They had fathomed nature to its depth, while psychology and physiology were to them open books, and the result was that science of machagiotia that is now termed, so superciliously, magic.

In the Puranas are mentioned seven branches of knowledge. Out of the four there described, the highest is Atma-Vidya or knowledge of Atma, the Divine Self. This is the true Spiritual and Divine Wisdom, which can throw absolute and final light on all other teachings. Without the help of Atma-Vidya, those sciences pertaining to religious rites, to magical knowledge, and to Mantras or mystical incantations, remain no better than surface sciences—geometrical magnitudes having length and breadth but no thickness. They are like the soul, limbs, and mind of a sleeping man: capable of mechanical motions, of chaotic dreams and even sleep-walking, of producing visible effects, but stimulated by instinctual not intellectual causes, least of all by fully conscious spiritual impulses. Atma-Vidya is translated simply "Knowledge of the Soul," true wisdom by the Orientalists, but means far more. All other arts and sciences may be mastered and results obtained, whether good, bad, or indifferent; but Atma-Vidya sets small value by them. It includes them all and may even use them occasionally, but it does so after purifying them of their dross, for beneficent purposes, and taking care to deprive them of every element of selfish motive. Atma-Vidya is the only kind of Occultism that any theosophist who admires "Light on the Path," and who would be wise and unselfish, ought to strive after.

The control of hidden forces is not easily obtained, nor can phenomena be produced without danger. In the view of the Theosophists the attainment of true wisdom, the Atma-Vidya, is not by means of phenomena but through the development which begins within. What is wanted is true knowledge of the spiritual condition of man, his aim, and his destiny. One must undergo a long preliminary training in knowledge, self-control, and the subjugation of the lower nature before he

would be in any way fit for instruction on the higher occult planes. Examination of occult phenomena can only be carried on properly by a trained brain guided by a living trinity of spirit, soul and mind. Those who have trained themselves by a long course of excessively hard discipline, which reaches to the moral and mental nature and quite beyond the power of the average man of the day, can use the astral form at will, for they have gotten completely over the delusion that the physical body is a permanent part of them. And besides, they have learned the chemical and electrical laws governing in these matters. So-called miracles, when genuine, are always perfectly in accord with natural law, hence—no miracles. The thaumaturgists of all periods, schools, and countries, produced their wonders because they were perfectly familiar with the imponderable—in their effects—but otherwise tangible waves of the astral light. They controlled the currents by guiding them with their will-power. Electricity and magnetism were unquestionably used in the production of some of the prodigies; but now, the same as then, they are put in requisition by every sensitive, who is made to use *unconsciously* these powers by the peculiar nature of his or her organization, which serves as a conductor for some of these imponderable fluids, as yet so imperfectly known to science.

ELECTRICITY—mighty word, and still mightier symbol! Sacred generator of no less sacred progeny: of fire—the creator, the preserver, and the destroyer; of light—the essence of our divine ancestors; of flame—the Soul of things. The electricity we handle is but the result of ordinary matter affected by something invisible, the "ultimate generating power" of every Force, the "one omnipresent influence." Hence it only becomes natural that one should believe as the ancients did: namely, that every Element is dual in its nature. Electricity, the One Life at the upper rung of being; and astral fluid, the Athanor of the alchemists, at its lowest: God and Devil, good and evil.

Thought is electricity; and it can be productive either for good or for evil in its effects. Thought has a self-reproductive power, and when the mind is held steadily to one idea it becomes colored by it and, as we say, all the correlates of that thought arise in the mind. Any evil or noble element of human nature converts itself, under "favorable" conditions into any other element however apparently remote. One of the first rules in the Brotherhood demands that those who start on their journey *Eastward* as candidates to notice and favor of those who are custodians of the mysteries, should proceed by the straight road,

without stopping on every sideway and path, seeking to join other "Masters," and professors of the Left-Hand Science; that they should have confidence and show trust and patience, besides several other conditions to fulfill.

Occult law prescribes silence upon the knowledge of certain secret and invisible things perceptible only to the spiritual mind (the sixth sense), and which cannot be expressed by uttered speech. This is the doctrine of the heart, which is the spiritual consciousness of the Ego—not perceived by the brain consciousness until right thought, and the right actions which sooner or later follow it, attune certain centers in the brain in accord with the spiritual *vibration.* Our real life is not what we take it to be, it is in the fiery depths of the heart. Remember that your truest adviser is to be found, and constantly sought, *within yourself;* one should find out his spirit-will and ignore a little the mental attitude one takes. The main point is to free the mind from the power of the senses and to raise a current of thought to the exclusion of all others. "The patient dwelling of the mind on a single thought results in the gaining of wisdom, and it is thus that the true Occultist is developed."

We are talking of a problem whose implacable front yields to nothing but force, and that force must be directed with *knowledge.* On the threshold of all these laws and states linger forces and beings of an awful and determined character. No one can avoid them as they are on the road that leads to knowledge, and they are every now and then awakened or perceived by those who, while completely ignorant, still persist in dabbling with charms and necromantic practices. We must not break the silence of the future, lest we raise up unknown and difficult *tribes* who will not be easy to deal with. The best advice is, do not try to open up communication with beings on other planes. It is not time, and danger lies that way, because of the power of creating one's own images, and because of the power and disposition of the dark forces to simulate beings of light, and render futile your efforts to reach the goal.

Evil, in human nature, denotes only the polarity of matter and spirit, a struggle for life between the two manifested Principles in space and time, which principles are one *per se,* inasmuch as they are rooted in the Absolute. In Kosmos, the equilibrium must be preserved. The operations of the two contraries produce harmony, like the centripetal and centrifugal forces, which are necessary to each other—mutually

interdependent—"in order that both should live." If one is arrested, the action of the other will become immediately self-destructive. It should be understood that not even the greatest of Yogis can divert the progress of Karma, or arrest the natural results of actions for more than a short period, and even in that case, these results will only reassert themselves later with even tenfold force, for such is the occult law.

Harmony comes from a balancing of diversities, and discord from any attempt to make harmony by force. We are in Kali Yuga, and its fatal influence is a thousand-fold more powerful in the West than it is in the East. The inner eye, the power of seeing, looks deeper into the source of a man's knowledge and takes it at its true value. How can it be thought possible for a man to enter the "straight gate" when his daily thoughts are bound up with worldly things, desires of possessions and power, with lust, ambition and duties, which, however honorable, are still of the earth earthy? The aspirant has to choose absolutely between the life of the world and the life of Occultism. It is useless and vain to endeavor to unite the two, for no one can serve two masters and satisfy both. It would be a ceaseless, a maddening struggle for almost any married man, who would pursue *true* practical Occultism, instead of its *theoretical* philosophy. For he would find himself ever hesitating between the voice of the impersonal divine love of Humanity, and that of the personal, terrestrial love.

There are "natural-born magicians"; mystics and occultists by birth, and by right of direct inheritance from a series of incarnations and æons of sufferings and failures. These are passion-proof, so to say. No fires of earthly origin can fan into a flame any of their senses or desires; no human voice can find response in their souls, except the great cry of Humanity. *These only may be certain of success.* Not so with those who have to carry yet for several incarnations the burden of sins committed in previous lives, and even in their present existence. For such, unless they proceed with great caution, the golden gate of Wisdom may get transformed into the wide gate and the broad way "that leadeth unto destruction," and therefore "many be they that enter in thereby." This is the Gate of the Occult *Arts,* not that of true Occultism—practiced for selfish motives and in the absence of the restraining and beneficent Atma-Vidya.

THE HEALING POWER OF SPEECH

THE genius of occultism does not consist in hunting after the bizarre and abnormal but rather in seeing, in the well-known and normal, the inner, hidden significance and potencies. If one cannot perceive the occult potentialities of the faculties and powers which are already man's possessions, he will never understand the laws and the rationale behind those rarer powers and faculties which are now the possession of the more advanced on the path of spiritual evolution, but which are the heritage of all those on the true pathway. The purview of Theosophy is the *whole* of Nature and of Man, and that whole includes and is concerned with the metaphysical and the invisible but nevertheless very real. There are laws and factors of a recondite nature behind and within our present senses and faculties, and if these are understood, they will furnish us with the key to an understanding of the laws governing our yet latent senses and powers, for Life is a Unity and the law of correspondence and analogy applies in every direction.

One of the most potent of our everyday, well-known powers is that of speech. *The Secret Doctrine* is replete with teachings on the nature and power of sound and speech, both in their plainly perceived aspects, and more especially in their unknown and occult aspects. The latter are but barely known to science, yet these have a most vital bearing on almost every phase of human life, and this may have been the reason why, under cyclic law, their revelation was necessary at the present time.

The gamut of every cycle of evolution from its dawn to its twilight and night may be expressed in terms of sound and speech, as revealed, for example, by such a word as "Logos." Terms such as "Unmanifested Logos" and "Manifested" or "Creative Logos" express spiritual stages in the evolutionary process, as well as the creative, preservative, and regenerative potencies of Sound. In addition to *The Secret Doctrine,* all the world's great scriptures, including the Bible, the youngest of the world-scriptures, contain such expressions. Thus, in John 1:1 we read: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And in John 1:14 is an echo of the archaic teaching of the cyclic appearance of divine avatars, really referring to *all* avatars, not to Jesus alone: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among

us . . . full of grace and truth." The teaching on the periodicity of divine avatars is given in *S.D.* II, 358:

> When mortals shall have become sufficiently spiritualised, there will be no more need of *forcing* them into a correct comprehension of ancient wisdom. Men will *know* then that there never was a great World-reformer, whose name has passed into our generation, who (*a*) was not a direct emanation of the LOGOS (under whatever name known to us), *i.e.,* an *essential* incarnation of one of "the seven," of the "divine Spirit who is sevenfold"; and (*b*) who had not appeared before, during the past Cycles.

Every man has the avataric principle in him, but the vast majority of humans, on incarnating, forget who and what they are, and thus fall prey to the allurements of the lower planes of matter. The acquisition of speech and the development of language are coeval with the lighting up of *Manas* in Mindless Man. As stated in a footnote—*S.D.* II, 199:

> *Language* is certainly coeval with reason, and could never have been developed before men became one with the informing principles in them—those who fructified and awoke to life the manasic element dormant in primitive man. For, as Professor Max Müller tells us in his *"Science of Thought,"* "Thought and language are identical." . . . Logos is both reason and speech.

Manas, as we know, is an integral part of the Immortal Triad, *Atma-Buddhi-Manas,* and so speech, being coeval with the awakening of *Manas,* is an inherent power and appanage of the Immortal EGO. When this Ego incarnates, *Manas* becomes dual. The distinction between these two aspects of mind is clearly drawn in the *Key to Theosophy* (p. 184):

> But once imprisoned, or incarnate, their essence becomes dual: that is to say, the *rays* of the eternal divine Mind, considered as individual entities, assume a two-fold attribute which is (*a*) their *essential* inherent characteristic, heaven-aspiring mind (higher *Manas*), and (*b*) the human quality of thinking, or animal cogitation, rationalised owing to the superiority of the human brain, the *Kama*-tending or lower Manas. One gravitates toward Buddhi, the other, tending downward, to the seat of passions and animal desires.

A logical deduction from the fact of the duality of *Manas* is that speech must likewise be of a dual character. If the consciousness is centered in higher *Manas,* one's speech would reflect and be in synchro-

nous harmony with that pure and heaven-aspiring principle and its plane; but if the consciousness is centered in the personal self, the speech would reflect and partake of the *Kama*-tending quality of lower *Manas* and its plane. In her article, "Psychic and Noëtic Action," H.P.B. points out that, not only is there an abyss between higher and lower *Manas,* but that they function on almost diametrically opposite planes. We quote the pertinent paragraph:

> For, as Occultism teaches, if the Higher Mind-Entity—the permanent and the immortal—is of the divine homogeneous essence of "Alaya-Akasa," or Mahat,—its reflection, the Personal Mind, is, as a temporary "Principle," of the Substance of the Astral Light. As a pure ray of the "Son of the Universal Mind," it could perform no functions in the body, and would remain powerless over the turbulent organs of Matter. Thus, while its inner constitution is Manasic, its "body," or rather functioning essence, is heterogeneous, and leavened with the Astral Light, the lowest element of Ether. It is a part of the mission of the Manasic Ray, to get gradually rid of the blind, deceptive element which, though it makes of it an active spiritual entity on this plane, still brings it into so close contact with matter as to entirely becloud its divine nature and stultify its intuitions. (THEOSOPHY 41: 443.)

There is implicit in this quotation, and H.P.B. specifically points it out in the concluding sentence of her article (*ibid.,* p. 446), that there is a dual power—good and bad—in the Astral Light itself: "Blessed is he who has acquainted himself with the dual powers at work in the ASTRAL Light; thrice blessed he who has learned to discern the *Noëtic* from the *Psychic* action of the 'Double-Faced' God in him, and who knows the potency of his own Spirit—or 'Soul Dynamics'." It is this higher aspect of both Lower *Manas* and the Astral Light which are responsive to the regenerative and uplifting influence emanating from the higher Mind-Entity and the pure *Akasic* plane. This higher aspect of lower *Manas* is closely related to, and practically one with, the *Antaskarana,* which is defined in *The Voice of the Silence* as "the Path of communication or communion between the personality and the higher *Manas* or human Soul."

In the light of the foregoing we would propound the question: Is there a practical way, one within the immediate reach and possibility of every aspirant, whereby he can earn the blessings referred to in the concluding sentence of "Psychic and Noëtic Action"; and then, through

his own conquest become the better able to help and teach others? The whole trend of our exposition suggests that there is such a way and that it lies through *speech.* We have seen that, corresponding to the duality of *Manas,* there are two general types of speech. We can speak either from the impersonal and altruistic aspect of the higher Divine Mind, or, from the personal, egotistic viewpoint of Lower *Manas.* Thus stated, the method of attuning ourselves to either the Higher or the lower planes may almost be embodied in a formula of speech. If our speech reflects Higher *Manas,* it will open a channel with the corresponding *Akasic* plane; if it reflects Lower *Manas* unenlightened by the Higher, the channel established will be with the chaotic and deceptive Astral Light. The influences and magnetic potencies flowing along the *Akasic* channel are spiritually enlightening, intellectually constructive, and physically healing; the emanations of the Astral Light are of a low, coarse, psychic nature, and physically debilitating.

To be borne in mind, also, of course, is that the magnetic affinity of speech for either the higher, spiritual, or the lower, psychic plane, does not depend on any mechanical or formal utterance of words, no matter how sublime the meanings of these might be, but rather on their ensouling spirit—the quality and feeling within and behind the outer expression. Simulation in this respect is impossible. Our attunement with the invisible, yet very real and substantial planes, is practically instantaneous, the mutually attractive power being governed by corresponding vibratory affinity, the latter being inherent in the quality and tone of the speech and not in the words as such. It is only when our speech truly expresses and reflects a sincere and abiding love for our fellowmen that it possesses the magic power to draw upon the regenerative life of the spiritual planes. The condition precedent to be fulfilled is contained in these Golden Precepts from *The Voice of the Silence*:

> Hast thou attuned thy heart and mind to the great mind and heart of all mankind? For as the sacred River's roaring voice whereby all Nature-sounds are echoed back, so must the heart of him "who in the stream would enter," thrill in response to every sigh and thought of all that lives and breathes.
>
> Hast thou attuned thy being to Humanity's great pain, O candidate for light?

In *Light on the Path,* the attainment first to be achieved is embodied in the aphorism: "Before the voice can speak in the presence of the

Masters it must have lost the power to wound." The voice loses this power only when the *personality* has been reduced to a cipher.

Speech in consonance with Higher *Manas* includes the duty of defending teachers, fellow-disciples, and all others from calumnious attacks. In her article, "Is Denunciation a Duty?" H.P.B. declared:

> In fact, the duty of defending a fellow-man stung by a poisonous tongue during his absence, and to abstain, in general, "from condemning others" is the very life and soul of practical theosophy, for such action is the handmaiden who conducts one into the narrow Path of the "higher life," that life which leads to the goal we all crave to attain. Mercy, Charity and Hope are the three goddesses who preside over that "life." To "abstain" from condemning our fellow beings is a tacit assertion of the presence in us of the three divine Sisters; to condemn on "hearsay" shows their absence. (THEOSOPHY 41: 534.)

H.P.B.'s reference to the three divine Sisters (Mercy, Charity, and Hope) brings to mind the almost identical words of Paul in the 13th Chapter of First Corinthians: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." Paul's likening uncharitable speech to "sounding brass," is literally, as well as figuratively, true—as the law of correspondences extends in all directions and includes the quality and value of metals. The Four Ages are designated in terms of metals, the Golden Age being the purest and most spiritual, while the Fourth or Iron Age is one of spiritual darkness. St. Paul's three divine Sisters may be seen in the verse: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita* enunciates the same doctrine of compassionate speech to lead one to the highest path. His words are: "Gentle speech which causes no anxiety, which is truthful and friendly, and diligence in reading the Scriptures, are said to be austerities of speech."

From time immemorial, sages have taught that speech—the supreme endowment of the Immortal Thinker—if used in consonance with the altruistic and selfless nature of the Divine Man, becomes the carrier of the creative, the preservative, and the regenerative powers of the godhead.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

IT would appear from the writings of H. P. Blavatsky that to outgrow dependence upon authority of any kind, to need no leaning-post, is the desired goal. Yet one who studies the writings of H.P.B., feeling that they hold a great deal of wisdom, sees in them a certain kind of authority—even though the nature of the authority is different, and leads the person to become more independent. How does the student of Theosophy compare, in regard to authority, with another man who arrives at such truths as reincarnation by his own independent thinking? Is the Theosophist less mature, and, if so, how and when will he do the rest of his growing up towards self-reliance?

(*a*) The dependency and self-reliance in question involve a discussion of important distinctions that should be made in regard to the nature of both religion and philosophy. By definition, religion (in the popular sense) involves dependency on the part of the religionist upon either a representative of the church, or some omnipotent power—personal or otherwise. Philosophy, for the individual, means the application of mental and intuitional faculties and energies to a search for truth. Philosophy also implies a comprehensive perspective which includes all sciences, physical and extra-physical.

Now, more specifically, it seems to me that the example of reincarnation-belief cited in the question as dependent upon "authority" is not entirely suitable. First of all, it seems possible, if not probable, that many students of Theosophy either cherished this idea before contacting the Teachings, or would have gradually grown into it, since it is so natural and reasonable. Surveys have shown that untold thousands live with and believe in this idea. As another possible example, the concept of man as a seven-fold being might be posited. But this concept is meant to be used as a *tool* for analyzing and facilitating a more thorough understanding of that complex being, man. It seems unlikely that many independent students of Truth arrive at this concept with the clarity and fullness which characterizes its presentation by H.P.B.

Another aspect of the question that invites investigation is the assumption that even the theosophic type of authority might in some sense be limiting. This, of course, is a possibility, in that to understand thoroughly and apply the "theosophic type of authority," so wisely

pointed out by the questioner, is a difficult task requiring the use of "subtle-sightedness." The positive point should be made, however, that "subtle sight" is within every man's potential capacity, but requires disciplines of the mind.

Still another point seems worth making. To correctly utilize the type of "authority" discussed above requires maturity, or at least relative maturity. The student who relishes a supposed "independence" too greatly will assume that *now* is the time, so to speak, to branch off on "independent research." Granting that there is an aspect of fresh speculation which is definitely valid, nevertheless too much "ego" here can result in losing one's basic orientation—and, most important of all, one's overall perspective. A constructive compromise, it seems, is to use the Theosophical texts *while* doing other reading and thinking. Thus the continuation of a healthy respect for the Teachers and Teachings can, as the student progresses, be a sign of that sort of maturity which we define as "proper humility."

Finally, the occult teaching of a natural pupil-teacher chain, extending from the lowest sentient being to the highest, has its bearing on this general subject.

(*b*) It is important and interesting to analyze the word "authority." Authority gives the right to determine, adjudicate, or otherwise settle issues or disputes. It is a right to control, command, or determine. Synonyms of authority are "control" and "influence." All denote a power or right to direct the actions or thoughts of others. Authority is a power or right to issue commands and to punish for violation.

Even a cursory reading of H. P. Blavatsky's writings is sufficient to show that H.P.B. never issued commands or specified "punishment, for violations." One might consider H.P.B.'s teachings as a "guide" in life, or as aids to help a student develop the capacity to use his own mental faculties independently. If we regard this statement from another viewpoint, however, it might also be said that a Theosophist is less than mature if he can attain truths only by the help of the teachings. It should be possible for a man to arrive at conviction in reincarnation by *his own* unaided thinking.

Yet is it really proved that he did arrive at certain truths fully "independently"? Could it not be said that in the course of his life he had picked up here and there some truths, maybe even subconsciously, and at a later date—being a somewhat independent individual—had combined his entire knowledge, thus arriving at certain conclusions?

What really makes the teachings of Theosophy outstanding is that they are in no way one-sided. They offer connectives with every fact in life, and are not specialized. A Theosophist might be regarded as less independent than some "freethinkers" because he gains knowledge by the aid of the teachings, yet even though he may progress a little slower than a "fully independent person" he grasps (or at least tries to grasp) *several truths simultaneously.* This gives him a broader area of knowledge. He might, at the time, not be entirely self-reliant, but has more chance to gain a fuller basis of self-reliance than someone who is limited by narrow and fragmentary religious doctrine.

Emotionalism is to be avoided as an extreme, yet the emotions must have their place in our nature. What is emotion? What motivates it? Are we ever justified in following it? Do the adepts experience emotion?

Growing to maturity is contingent on a healthy emotional nature, an understanding of it, and reasonable control of its forces. A danger among serious theosophical students is the tendency to regard the "lower nature" as a vague conglomeration of energies that must be bullied into a psychological cellar lest they overwhelm the spiritual nature. This, at best, is a gross oversimplification of the relationship of the emotions to the total man.

One can easily tire of the great lengths that psychologists go to in emphasizing the necessity of healthy "emotional adjustment." Nevertheless, theirs is a point well taken in that repression is not a solution to emotional control. The admonition of R.C. in one of his letters to an aspiring student should be pondered well: "Grow as the flower grows, from within outward." The obvious implication being that lasting growth is a slow and gradual process, to be accomplished through self-knowledge and not by way of simple formulas.

The theosophic ideal for human development is in the gradual lifting and refining of the whole man. Obviously, having positive emotional responses, to want to do those things which *must* be done, is quite an aid in their achievement. Since, however, the emotions in most human beings are not of a constant quality, it would be foolish to rely on them alone. It seems that Arjuna is a good case in point: he had to gain control of the horses pulling his chariot, but nevertheless he needed their pulling-power. True, at times the horses want to go in the wrong direction, and then it is necessary to let them know firmly, though kindly, who is in charge.

A THEOSOPHICAL SCHOLAR

> Virtuous, therefore, is the man who relieves the corporeal wants of others, who wipes away the tear of sorrow, and gives agony repose; but more virtuous he who, by disseminating wisdom, expells ignorance from the soul, and thus benefits the immortal part of man.
>
> —THOMAS TAYLOR

THOUGH hardly recognized today as a profound philosopher, Thomas Taylor nevertheless clearly stands out as the giant Platonic scholar of all times. For the Theosophical student, he is even more—an outspoken and fearless champion of theosophical doctrines, openly avowed and elaborated at great length. No doubt Taylor was the only person able to do this without veiling his ideas in Christian terminology, as was the case with so many who dared not come into the open with pagan concepts. Taylor's was a brave declaration of principles in the face of bigotry, prejudice, and slander; and for a time this earned him malevolence, ridicule, denunciation, and irrational criticism, similar to the vilification heaped upon H. P. Blavatsky.

Taylor made the following avowal of his belief in philosophic pantheism, which from early life earned him the general disapprobation of both the learned and the "rabble" of his time:

> The religion of the heathen has indeed for many centuries been the object of ridicule and contempt; yet the author of the present work is not ashamed to own that he is a perfect convert to it in every particular, so far as it was understood and illustrated by the Pythagoric and Platonic philosophers. Indeed, the theology of the ancients, as well as the modern vulgar, was no doubt full of absurdity, but that of the ancient philosophers appears to be worthy of the highest commendations and the most assiduous cultivation. (From a Note to *The Life of Proklos.*)

A true philosopher, Taylor cared naught for public opinion, and it must have seemed irrelevant to him that his work received constant criticism from his contemporaries. He once wrote: "My views have been liberal in the publication, and my mental advantages considerable from the study of ancient philosophy. Amidst the various storms of a life distinguished by outrage and disease it has been a never failing support and an inviolable retreat. It has smoothed the brow of care and dispelled the gloom of despondence; sweetened the bitterness of grief, and lulled agony to rest. After reaping such valuable advantages

from its acquisition I am already rewarded though my labors should be unnoticed by the present and future generations. The lyre of true philosophy is no less tuneful in the desert than in the city; and he who knows how to call forth its latent harmony in solitude will not want the testimony of the multitude to convince him that its melody is ecstatic and divine."

Thomas Taylor was born on May 15, 1758, in London. His father, a worthy dissenting minister, designed his son for the sacred calling, and sent him at the age of nine years to St. Paul's School to be educated. Here, Taylor soon gave indications of that contemplative turn of mind and aversion to merely verbal disquisition which afterwards became such predominant features of his character. He truly saw what kind of thought was "worthy of a philosopher," to use a phrase often employed by Mr. Ryder, one of young Taylor's instructors in the classics. In fact, the more one reads of Taylor's life-story, the clearer it becomes that his whole life was "worthy" in that sense.

Taylor lived to be seventy-seven years old, having spent nearly half a century in studying and translating Plato's writings and those of his commentators, the famous Neo-Platonists of the early Christian era. Taylor, rightfully surnamed "The Platonist," translated into English for the first time *all* the works available in Greek originals, made copious and invaluable comments and notes, and wrote numerous introductions amounting to several "Secret Doctrines" in length when collated.

Thomas Taylor published more than sixty books, replete with truly theosophical language, covering the works of Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Iamblichus, Porphyry, Julian, Maximus Olympiodorus, Damascius, Proclus, and a host of lesser philosophers of the Neo-Platonic school —all of whom contributed their share to the development of Plato's ideas, especially in unveiling their arcane, or esoteric, meaning. Taylor also translated the works of Pausanias, a Platonic historian, the *Hymns of Orpheus,* the *Oracles of the Chaldeans,* and many fragments and biographies of the great Platonic commentators.

Lastly, he wrote original works on higher mathematics possessing occult significance, and treatises on the inner meaning of myths and fables which were identical in method to that of H.P.B. His *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries* also ranks as a theosophical production, in which Taylor shows, for instance, that the fable of Demeter and Persephone depicts, in one of its aspects, the "pilgrimage of the soul"—its descent

into physical life and reascent in a progressive series of lives or metempsychoses. This was probably Taylor's first book (as he refers to it as "one of my juvenile productions"), although it was not published until 1791.

This dissertation has been considered "by far the best treatise of modern times on the ancient mysteries," the lucubrations of other writers on the subject so often seeming shallow or unsympathetic in comparison. It has often been quoted by continental scholars, by way of authority. In his introduction, Taylor wrote:

> As there is nothing more celebrated than the mysteries of the ancients, so there is, perhaps, nothing which has hitherto been less solidly known. Of the truth of this observation the liberal reader will, I persuade myself, be fully convinced from an attentive perusal of the following sheets, in which the secret meaning of the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries is unfolded from authority the most respectable, and from a philosophy of all others the most venerable and august. The authority, indeed, is principally derived from manuscript writings, which are, of course, in the possession of but a few; but its respectability is no more lessened by its concealment than the value of a diamond when secluded from the light. And as to the philosophy by whose assistance these mysteries are developed, it is coeval with the universe itself; and however its continuity may be broken by opposing systems, it will make its appearance at different periods of time, as long as the sun himself shall continue to illuminate the world.

Taylor's Introduction to his monumental *Works of Plato* in Fifty-Five Dialogues is full of valuable expositions of Plato's system and philosophy, taking the reader through the whole round, or Grand Cycle, of Cosmogenesis in a manner amazingly similar to that employed by Madame Blavatsky in her *Secret Doctrine.* Taylor proceeds from the "First Principle" through the *Logoi* to the Creative Intelligences, thence to the Microcosm Man, and to the Second Fundamental, here named "Fate" and "Providence." Reincarnation is dealt with in terms of periodical revolutions and "restitutions," "reminiscences of a previous life," "pre-existence," and "transmigration."

Thomas Taylor, true to ancient tradition, defines philosophy thus, agreeing with Hierokles, that "Philosophy is the purification and perfection of human life. It is the purification, indeed, from material irrationality and the mortal body; but the perfection, in consequence of being the resumption of our proper felicity, and a reascent to the divine likeness. To effect these two is the province of *virtue* and *truth;*

the former exterminating the immoderation of the passions, and the latter introducing the divine form to those who are naturally adapted to its reception." Taylor continues:

> Of philosophy thus defined, which may be compared to a luminous pyramid, terminating in Deity, and having for its basis the rational soul of man and its spontaneous unperverted conceptions,—of this philosophy, august, magnificent, and divine, Platon possesses this preëminence; that its dignity and sublimity are unrivalled; that it is the parent of all that ennobles man; that it is founded upon principles which neither time can obliterate nor sophistry subvert, is the principal design of this Introduction. To effect this design, I shall in the first place present the reader with the outlines of the principal dogmas of Platon's philosophy. The undertaking is indeed no less novel than arduous, since the author of it has to tread in paths which have been untrodden for upward of a thousand years, and to bring to light truths which for that extended period have been concealed in Greek. Let not the reader, therefore, be surprised at the solitariness of the paths through which I shall attempt to conduct him, or at the novelty of the objects which will present themselves in the journey; for perhaps he may fortunately recollect that he has travelled the same road before, that the scenes were once familiar to him, and that the country through which he is passing is his native land.

Of the First Principle of Things, Taylor had this to say: "The Highest God, *The Good, The One,* is not only above soul and intellect, but is even superior to being itself, and perfectly ineffable. Neither does any *name* belong to it, nor *discourse,* nor any *science,* nor *sense,* nor *opinion.* Hence it can neither be *named,* nor *spoken of,* nor *conceived by opinion,* nor be *known* nor *perceived* by any being."

> God is all things, for the first principle is *all things prior to all, i.e.,* it comprehends all things casually [causally?], this being the most transcendent mode of comprehension. As all things, therefore, considered as subsisting casually in deity, are *transcendentally more excellent* than they are when considered as effects proceeding from him, hence that mighty and all-comprehending whole, the first principle is said to be all things prior to all; priority here denoting exempt transcendency. As the Monad and the centre of a circle are images from their simplicity of this greatest of principles, so likewise do they perspicuously shadow forth to us its casual comprehension of all things. For all number may be considered as subsisting occultly in the monad, and the circle in the centre; this occult being the same in each with casual subsistence.

In speaking of the many means chosen to symbolize or allegorize these high concepts—as Plato did with "fables"—Taylor held to the

threefold division of "those who speak through images, those who use the scientific (or metaphysical) vein and those who are enthusiastically inspired." These divisions serve to broadly govern the familiar fields of art, disciplined philosophy, and religion. Taylor calls the "fabulous" form "Orphic," those who use images are Pythagoric—"for the mathematical disciplines were invented by the Pythagoreans in order to be a reminiscence of divine concerns, at which, through these, as images, they endeavor to arrive. For they refer both number and figure to the gods, according to the testimony of their historians." The scientific approach is eminently Platonic, for Plato attempts to divide and reduce into order "the regular progression of the divine genera, their mutual difference, the common peculiarities of the total orders, and the distributed peculiarities in each."

Taylor throws further light on the use of fable by remarking: "Platon combines fabulous narrations with investigations of ethical dogmas, not for the sake of the fables, but for the sake of the leading design, that we may not only exercise the intellectual part of the soul, through contending reasons, but that the divine part of the soul may more perfectly receive the knowledge of being through its sympathy with more mystic concerns. For from other discourses we appear similar to those who are compelled to the reception of truth; but from fables we suffer in an ineffable manner, and call forth our unpervaded conceptions, venerating the mystic information which they contain."

But to return to a consideration of Deity and its Hypostases—which might be regarded as corresponding to the three *Logoi* of the First Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*:

> Having ascended with venturous yet unpresuming wing to the ineffable principle of things, and standing with every eye closed in the vestibules of the adytum, found that we could announce nothing concerning him, but only indicate doubt and disappointment, and having thence descended to his occult and most venerable progeny, and passing through the luminous world of ideas, holding fast to the golden chain of deity, terminating our downward flight in the material universe, and its undecaying wholes, let us stop a while and contemplate the sublimity and magnificence of the scene which this journey presents to our view. Here then we see the vast empire of deity—an empire terminated upwards by a principle so ineffable that all language is subverted about it, and downwards by the vast body of the world. Immediately subsisting after this immense unknown, we in the next place behold a mighty all-comprehending one, which as being next

to that which is in every respect incomprehensible, possesses much of the ineffable and unknown. From this principle of principles in which all things causally subsist absorbed in superessential light, and involved in unfathomable depths, we view a beauteous progeny of principles, all largely partaking of the ineffable, all stamped with the occult characters of deity, all possessing an overflowing fulness of good. From these dazzling summits, these ineffable blossoms, these divine propagations, we see being, life, intellect, soul, nature and body depending, monads suspended from unities, deified natures proceeding from deities. Each of these monads too, is the leader of a series which extends from itself to the last of things, and which while it proceeds from, at the same time abides in and returns to its leader. And all these principles and all their progeny, are finally centered and rooted by their summits in the first great all-comprehending one.

[Students acquainted with the Proëm of *The Secret Doctrine* will relate the above to that section and see an almost perfect correspondence of concept and sequence.]

Taylor synthesizes the Microcosm thus:

Having thus taken a general survey of the great world, and descended from the intelligible to the sensible universe, let us still, adhering to that golden chain which is bound round the summit of Olympos, and from which all things are suspended, descend to the microcosm man. For man comprehends in himself partially every thing which the world contains divinely and totally. Hence, according to Platon, he is endowed with an intellect subsisting in energy, and a rational soul proceeding from the same father and vivific goddess as were the causes of the intellect and soul of the universe. He has likewise an ethereal vehicle analogous to the heavens, and a terrestrial body composed from the four elements, and with which also it is coordinate. With respect to his rational part, for in this the essence of man consists, it is of a self-motive nature, and subsists between intellect, which is immovable both in essence and energy, and nature which both moves and is moved.

Following is a portion of Taylor's discourse on metempsychosis or reincarnation:

As the soul is *always* moved, and this always is not eternal but temporal, for that which is properly eternal, and such is intellect, is perfectly stable and has no transitive energies, hence it is necessary that its motions should be periodic. For motion is a certain mutation from some things to others. And beings are terminated by multitudes and magnitudes. These, therefore, being terminated, there can neither be an infinite mutation, according to a right line, nor can that which is always moved proceed according to a finished progression. Hence

that which is always moved will proceed from the same to the same, and will thus form a periodic motion. Hence, too, the human, and this also is true of every mundane soul, uses periods and restitutions of its proper life. For in consequence of being measured by time, it energizes transitively and possesses a proper motion. But everything which is moved perpetually and participates of time, revolves periodically and proceeds from the same to the same. And hence the soul, from possessing motion and energizing according to time, will both possess periods of motion and restitutions to its pristine state. From all this it follows that the soul, while an inhabitant of earth, is in a fallen condition, an apostate from deity, an exile from the orb of light. . . .

From this account it follows that our soul essentially contains all knowledge, and that whatever knowledge she acquires in the present life, is in reality nothing more than a recovery of what she once possessed. This recovery is very properly called by Platon reminiscence, not as being attended with actual recollection in the present life, but as being in actual repossession of what the soul had lost through her oblivious union with the body. It is requisite therefore that the soul entering within herself, should investigate in her self *the true and the good,* and the eternal reason of things.

It is fitting to close this brief summary of Taylor's philosophy by a quotation from H. P. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled,* where she speaks of "the untiring labors of that honest and brave defender of the ancient faith, Thomas Taylor." She continues:

However much dogmatic Greek scholarship may have found to say against his "mistranslations," his memory must be dear to every true Platonist, who seeks rather to learn the inner thought of the great philosopher than enjoy the mere external mechanism of his writings. Better classical translators may have rendered us, in more correct phraseology, Plato's *words,* but Taylor shows us Plato's *meaning,* and this is more than can be said of Zeller, Jowett, and their predecessors. Yet, as writes Professor A. Wilder, "Taylor's works have met with favor at the hands of men capable of profound and recondite thinking; and it must be conceded that he was endowed with a superior qualification—that of an intuitive perception of the interior meaning of the subjects which he considered. Others may have known more Greek, but he knew more Plato."

Taylor devoted his whole useful life to the search after such old manuscripts as would enable him to have his own speculations concerning several obscure rites in the Mysteries corroborated by writers who had been initiated themselves. (II, 108-9.)

ON THE LOOKOUT

Churchmen Seek "Proof" of Afterlife

Writing from London for the Cincinnati *Post* of Aug. 2, Robert Musel reports an interesting phase in the present attempt of Christian orthodoxy to justify metaphysical premises. As has frequently been noted in Lookout, the general tendency in Protestant Christianity—and even in some circles of Catholicism—has been to reduce church teachings to essential ethics bound to be appreciated by "right-thinking" men. But what of Church promises of an afterlife? The average person continues to be *concerned,* even if only subconsciously, with the question of immortality, but he is no longer impressed by antiquated teachings positing a physical heaven and hell. But psychical study seems to offer hope of buttressing a watered-down "heaven" doctrine, awarding a pleasant, easy life after death. Mr. Musel writes:

> A group of churchmen and laymen is engaged in quiet but dramatic efforts to prove that life exists after death. They have formed themselves into "The Churches Fellowship for Psychical Study" and are conducting experiments designed "to confirm Christian belief that those who pass on continue in a fuller life."
>
> The fellowship was organized late last year and although it has been mildly criticized by "orthodox" church circles, its membership, according to Lt. Col. Reginald M. Lester, one of the founders, has soared to well over one thousand.
>
> Many clerics are adherents, he said, and supporters and consultants include the dean of St. Paul's, the bishop of Ripon, Prof. H. H. Price of Oxford and Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, a prominent London church figure.

A Change of Tone

Time was when the official Christian pronouncement in regard to all spiritual phenomena, regardless of denomination, was that the scriptures forbade "communications with evil spirits." But now that there is a chance the spirits may spur the lagging interest of church adherents, a new interpretation is being promoted. "The kind of communications that the scriptures forbade" said Lester, "was with evil spirits of 'the dead,' that is, evil spirits dead in the sense they were separated from God."

Mr. Musel's report continues:

> The Bishop of Ripon, who presided at a recent meeting of the fellowship, was quoted as saying of psychical research:
>
> "I am convinced that there are numerous things here that concern the church. There are all manner of things which are called psychical phenomena in the New Testament."
>
> The dean of St. Paul's has told members of Parliament that psychical research has an important bearing on Christian theology and deplored that so many good Christians believe all spirit communication is the work of the devil.

TOO LATE?

Had the church been less hostile to H.P.B. in her time, and had it been willing to consider the interpretation of phenomena furnished in *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine,* attention paid to "spiritualism" might have been extremely beneficial to orthodox religionists. Now, however, one may doubt that the development mentioned will win many new constituents. The lead in psychical investigation has passed safely beyond the hands of both spiritualists and theologians, being taken up by men of scientific training who, in universities and "para-psychological laboratories," proceed in impartial manner to evaluate the "realms beyond the senses."

THE TERRY LECTURES AT YALE UNIVERSITY

In 1955, as in 1950 with publication of Erich Fromm's *Psychoanalysis and Religion,* the Dwight H. Terry Memorial Lectures present to the scholarly world a volume of considerable theosophical significance. The lecturer for this year was Gordon W. Allport, distinguished Harvard psychologist, and his volume, entitled *Becoming,* continues many of the developments which Theosophists have become familiar with through study of *Psychoanalysis and Religion.*

The specifications of the Terry Lectures endowment are strongly reminiscent of the Second Object of the original Theosophical Society, the central purpose being to encourage the delivery and subsequent publication of "Lectures on Religion in the Light of Science and Philosophy." Following is an explanation of the requirements:

> The deed of gift declares that "the object of this Foundation is not the promotion of scientific investigation and discovery, but rather the assimilation and interpretation of that which has been or shall be hereafter discovered, and its application to human welfare, especially

by the building of the truths of science and philosophy into the structure of a broadened and purified religion. The founder believes that such a religion will greatly stimulate intelligent effort for the improvement of human conditions and the advancement of the race in strength and excellence in character. To this end it is desired that lectures or a series of lectures be given by men eminent in their respective departments, on ethics, the history of civilization and religion, biblical research, all sciences and branches of knowledge which have an important bearing on the subject, all the great laws of nature, especially of evolution . . . also such interpretations of literature and sociology as are in accord with the spirit of this Foundation, to the end that Christian spirit may be nurtured in the fullest light of the world's knowledge and that mankind may be helped to attain its highest possible welfare and happiness upon this earth . . .

A Theosophical Quest for Truth

The lectures shall be subject to no philosophical or religious test and no one who is an earnest seeker after truth shall be excluded because his views seem radical or destructive of existing beliefs. The founder realizes that the liberalism of one generation is often conservatism in the next, and that many an apostle of true liberty has suffered martyrdom at the hands of the orthodox. He therefore lays special emphasis on complete freedom of utterance, and would welcome expressions of conviction from sincere thinkers of differing standpoints even when these may run counter to the generally accepted views of the day. The founder stipulates only that the managers of the fund shall be satisfied that the lecturers are well qualified for their work and are in harmony with the cardinal principles of the Foundation, which are loyalty to the truth, lead where it will, and devotion to human welfare.

Characteristic Emphases of Religions

Of the many philosophic works produced by professing Christians, Barbara Ward's *Faith and Freedom* stands as good illustration of the vitality still to be drawn from Christian symbolism and from the example of Jesus of Nazareth—especially if one is willing to forsake narrow sectarian interpretations and seek for universal meanings. When this is done, the unnecessary barriers between the traditional perspective of Western religion and the outlook of Eastern philosophies melt away; in *Faith and Freedom,* this is demonstrated by a willingness to learn from the contributions of Hinduism and Buddhism. In a chapter entitled "The Second Adam," Barbara Ward remarks:

In one sense, Christ belongs to that sublime band of teachers who, in the era of the world religions, taught mankind to turn from the

idea of an external ritual order to the concept of an inner moral law, chosen in freedom and fulfilled in spirit and in truth. The rule of life laid down in the Gospels is not greatly different from the teachings of Buddha or Lao-tse or the Stoic philosophers of Greece, just as they in turn recall the spiritual insights of the mystics in primitive society. To love the Good, to practice altruism, to hold one's spirit aloof from the ambitions and desires of the world—these are the staple doctrines of the Golden Rule, common to all great sages and fully revealed for humanity in the millennia before Christ.

"A New Race of Men"

The author of *Faith and Freedom* regards Christ as "the firstborn of a new race of men who, as the spiritual kingdom is spread on earth, will achieve a unity of nature and supernature comparable to our present union of mind and animal nature but transcending it as rational life transcends the sentient life below it." Miss Ward continues:

> These "new men," these saints and mystics, may be as obscure and apparently powerless as the first human beings must have seemed, in the dawn of rational life, to the larger mammals among which they lived. Indeed, each stage of evolution would have been completely mysterious had we not been reading the story backward. There is no reason to suppose its next phase will be more obvious or sudden than the last. But we can at least observe some faint analogy between the emergence among scattered human beings of rational power and the appearance, in the saints and mystics of the world, of more than ordinary vision and capacity. Surveying the human scene, we can at least doubt whether men of any other type—the conquerors, for instance, or the despots or the economic empire builders—seem to carry in them the smallest seed of a more than rational life.

Still the Desire for "Uniqueness"

Nevertheless, Miss Ward labors to discover an element in Christianity which is preëminent, and which makes the Christian tradition greatest of all. In her concluding chapter she attempts the following argument:

> It is thus the unique character of Christianity, among all the world religions, to have grasped not only the infinitude of the Creator but also the dynamism of His creation. For all its evil and suffering and sin, the world is rescued from the last horror—the horror of meaninglessness. History may be difficult to decipher but it is not a mindless record of violence and pride, of conquest and defeat. The effort of man to remake himself in the image of his Maker and to remake the world in the pattern of a divine order gives greatness and significance

> even to his failures. Since he is finite and free, he must sometimes fail. Since he has God-given reason and grace, his story is nonetheless one of slow ascent. In every other tradition, the height of vision seems to have reached no further than a static perfection or else the ultimate gulf of infinity. It is only in Christianity that Creator and Creation are understood together in a dynamic relationship of freedom and love.

Limitations of Special Pleading

In all honesty, Miss Ward admits that evidence for her contention rests on rather shaky foundations, adding "yet to say that in Christianity man can find the profoundest insights into his own nature and into the meaning of history leaves him confronted with the tragic fact that, at present, these insights carry with them the differences and even animosities of a divided Christianity."

In other words, Miss Ward is reduced to arguing that while the Christian tradition is actually the most inspirational, the trouble is simply that *true* Christianity has not yet been fully grasped nor sacrificially applied. While one can sympathize with Miss Ward's idealism and understand her interpretation of the comparative value of the great religious traditions, it is significant that the Harvard psychologist, Gordon Allport—*not* arguing from a basically Christian premise—feels that the evaluation of comparative religions must begin with evaluation of a native individual conscience and moral perceptiveness. In this light one is no longer tempted to prove superiority of any one faith. In his recent Terry Lectures, *Becoming,* Dr. Allport writes:

> Conscience in personality is by no means always religiously toned. High moral character is found among the nonreligious. Conscience pre-supposes only a reflective ability to refer conflicts to the matrix of values that are felt to be one's own. I experience "ought" whenever I pause to relate a choice that lies before me to my ideal self-image. Normally when inappropriate decisions are made, I feel guilt. Guilt is a poignant suffering, seldom reducible in an adult to a fear of, or experience of, punishment. It is rather a sense of violated value, a disgust at falling short of the ideal self-image.
>
> The theory I am here suggesting holds that the must-consciousness precedes the ought-consciousness, but that in the course of transformation three important changes occur. 1. External sanctions give way to internal—a change adequately accounted for by the processes of identification and introjection familiar in Freudian and behavioral theory. 2. Experiences of prohibition, fear, and "must" give way to

experiences of preference, self-respect, and "ought." This shift becomes possible in proportion as the self-image and value-systems of the individual develop. 3. Specific habits of obedience give way to generic self-guidance, that is to say, to broad schemata of values that confer direction upon conduct.

As a science, psychology can neither prove nor disprove religion's claims to truth. It can, however, help explain why these claims are so many and so diverse. They represent the final meanings achieved by unique personalities in diverse lands and times. Organized religious sects reflect comparable sets of meanings within which the unique meanings achieved by individuals may cluster for purposes of communication and common worship.

Silence Treatment for Polio Findings

A *Manas* editorial (Oct. 12) calls attention to Dr. Benjamin P. Sandler's *Diet Prevents Polio* (Lee Foundation for Nutritional Research, 1951) and remarks: "It came to us as something of a surprise —even a shock—to learn that this information has been publicly available since January, 1941, in the *American Journal of Pathology* where Dr. Sandler reported his experimental findings."

The silence treatment accorded Dr. Sandler's researches is in marked contrast to the nation-wide acclamation of the Salk vaccine, and automatically raises speculations as to "why."

A Simple Prevention for a Dread Disease

"Diet is a major factor in Polio prevention," Dr. Sandler says. "Eliminate from the diet sugar and foods containing sugar, and reduce the consumption of foods containing starch." He explains:

> Since eating sugar and starch during a meal may cause low blood sugar and starch after one to three hours, and since elimination of sugar and starch prevents low blood sugar, the invasion of the body by the polio virus will be prevented by a diet containing no sugar and no starch. *Protection against polio would thus begin on the very day such a diet was started and protection would last just as long as such a diet was adhered to.* I have found that a diet completely free of sugar and starch and consisting of proteins, fats, and non-starchy vegetables, may be adhered to for years with beneficial effect and absolutely without harmful effect. There is no supporting evidence to indicate that sugar and starch are necessary for health or for energy purposes. The human is a carnivore and can thrive on protein and fat alone, if necessary.

Experimental Basis for Assertion

Dr. Sandler, an authority on nutrition, noted the relationship between low blood sugar and susceptibility to infection. Normally, the blood sugar content is from 80 to 100 mg. in each 100 cc. of blood. "When the blood sugar falls to 60 to 70 mg., the symptoms are usually mild and may consist of slight headache, faintness, muscular weakness, hunger, irritability, [etc.]. When the blood sugar falls to 50 to 60 mg., the symptoms are more marked. . . . If the blood sugar falls to 40 mg., or lower, unconsciousness usually occurs." The following experimental method was used to test Dr. Sandler's theory:

> In 1938, the only laboratory animal that could contract polio by experimental inoculation was the monkey. All other laboratory animals were completely resistant to the polio virus. The rabbit is one of these resistant animals. . . .
>
> In monkeys, blood sugar values as low as 50 mg. were observed, whereas in the rabbit, values below 100 mg. were never observed. . . . It was therefore concluded that the susceptibility of the monkey to the polio virus was due to the fact that its blood sugar fell to subnormal values, and that the resistance of the rabbit might be associated with the fact that its blood sugar never fell below 100 mg. and that at this concentration cellular ovidation of glucose in the nervous system and other organs would be maintained at such a level as to enable the cells to protect themselves against invasion by the virus.
>
> The next step was to lower the blood sugar of the rabbit to subnormal values with insulin injections, and then inoculate the rabbit with polio virus. This was done and *it was found that the rabbits became infected and developed the disease.*

Corroborating Evidence

> The rabbit is also resistant to the dog distemper virus. One of the largest research laboratories has conducted much research with this virus and when I informed the members of the staff about my success in inoculating rabbits with polio virus after lowering the blood sugar, they inoculated rabbits with the dog distemper virus after insulin and reported to me that they observed signs of infection in the rabbit for the first time. This corroborating experiment indicates that low blood sugar may cause susceptibility to many infections.

Opportunity of Testing Theory on Humans

The co-operation and backing of a public health agency was necessary in order to test the theory adequately; but when Dr. Sandler reported his findings to such an agency during the 1944 epidemic, and

suggested that a starchless, sugarless diet be prescribed, "no action was taken."

There the matter rested until the summer of 1948, when it became evident that the city in which Dr. Sandler lived, Asheville, N.C., was headed for a major polio epidemic. "Churches, theaters, swimming pools, and parks were closed; public gatherings, discouraged." Feeling that the time had now come for direct action on his part, Dr. Sandler approached the editors of Asheville newspapers. On Aug. 4, 1948, the Asheville *Times* carried a detailed article telling of Dr. Sandler's research, including the following direct statements made by him:

> I am willing to state without reserve that such a diet [no sugar, little starch], . . . strictly observed, can build up in 24 hours' time a resistance in the human body sufficiently strong to combat the disease. Of course, the diet must be followed throughout the period of the epidemic.
>
> One of the puzzling characteristics of polio has been its prevalence in warm weather. Many people cut down on protective foods such as meats, fish, and poultry because of a mistaken idea that a "light" diet is better for them in warm weather. And they increase the consumption of cooling foods and beverages, most of them heavily sweetened. It is this increase in consumption of sugar that produces a lowering of blood sugar and thereby a lowering of the body's resistance to the polio virus.

Results in Asheville

Dr. Sandler, though hitherto reluctant to approach the public via the newspapers, was delighted with the result. He reports an unexpected degree of co-operation from the people of Asheville, who "welcomed the opportunity to help themselves. . . . One of the striking effects was the immediate improvement in morale. Parents felt that they were doing something constructive instead of just standing by and hoping the disease would not strike their homes." As for the epidemic itself:

> Up until August 4, 1948, the city of Asheville had 55 cases of polio. If one assumes that the peak had been reached on that date, one could have expected about 55 cases during the decline until the end of the year. . . . However, instead of 55 cases there were only 21 new cases in Asheville from August 4 to December 31.
>
> Actually, however, in the southeastern United States, polio epidemic peaks are usually reached during early September. If the epidemic had been allowed to run its course without the diet story, there might have been around 75 cases in Asheville by the first week in September

(a conservative estimate), with a similar number following the peak. Thus there could have been a total of 150 cases in Asheville for the entire season. Actually, there were 76 cases for the entire season, or about half the expected number.

Theosophical Implications

The relevance of quoting these passages in Lookout, we feel, is clear enough. A proper study of diet is a study in the interrelationship and interdependence of nature—a recognition of "pantheistic reality." Further, the practice of any regulatory system of food intake requires, as most know, a considerable amount of self-discipline. Both, students of H. P. Blavatsky are given to understand, are good for the aspiring Theosophist. And for everyone else, for that matter.

New Method in Brain Surgery

The San Francisco *Examiner* for April 13 reported a "radical new method of operating on the human brain, substituting 'silent sound' for the surgeon's scalpel." The technique was described by Prof. Wm. J. Fry, of the University of Illinois:

> The procedure utilizes inaudible sound waves of an ultra-high frequency, disturbing no tissue except a predetermined target area at the focal point of three or more sound beams.
>
> The machine overcomes the two major obstacles to modern brain surgery: tissue damaged either by direct cutting or by electrically heated wires which are inserted through healthy tissue to reach the diseased area.
>
> The sound wave technique eliminates all possibility of damaging healthy tissue and requires only the usual removal of a small portion of the skull bone.
>
> The converging sound waves can then pass through the brain tissue without disturbing it, except at the point where the waves focus.

Potency of Sound

Even though mindful that the greater the potency for good, the greater the potentiality for harm, Theosophists will doubtless feel that the use of "inaudible sound" (vibrations in the occult gamut) is a step in advance of surgical procedure. A few passages from *The Secret Doctrine,* Vol. I, will furnish a basis for individual consideration:

> Sound and rhythm are closely related to the four Elements of the Ancients; such or another vibration in the air is sure to awaken corresponding powers, union with which produces good or bad results,

as the case may be. (307.) Sound is the most potent and effectual magic agent. . . . (404.)

We say and maintain that SOUND, for one thing, is a tremendous Occult power; that it is a stupendous force, of which the electricity generated by a million of Niagaras could never counteract the smallest potentiality when directed with *occult knowledge.* Sound may be produced of such a nature that the pyramid of Cheops would be raised in the air, or that a dying man, nay, one at his last breath, would be revived and filled with new energy and vigour. . . . may even *resurrect* a man or an animal whose astral "vital body" has not been irreparably separated from the physical body by the severance of the magnetic or odic chord. (555.)

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT A CONTINUING ISSUE

Judging from the Manchester *Guardian,* Sept. 16, capital punishment continues to be a live issue in England. Mr. George Benson, House of Commons, in a letter to the editor of *Guardian,* replies to some "misconceptions" of another subscriber. Mr. Benson's letter says in part:

It is true that some murderers are guilty of a series of murders, but this is exceedingly rare. Of the six thousand persons who have committed murder during the past fifty years, one would have great difficulty in finding a dozen who had committed a series.

We already reprieve almost as many murderers as we hang. Those who are reprieved normally prove to be exemplary prisoners, and are set free in due course. In the last figures published only one reprieved murderer had been kept in prison for more than ten years. As a result of long experience, it has been found that release generally comes between the fifth and tenth year. There is only one recorded case of a released murderer having committed a second murder.

Nor need one worry about the effect of abolition on our overcrowded prisons. Out of a prison population of over 20,000 there are only about fifty who are reprieved murderers. To get rid of capital punishment would increase this number to about 120, certainly not more.

I agree that [certain recent proposals] are not likely to be very effective. I believe the better method is to educate public opinion by correcting misconceptions such as those that appear in the letter.